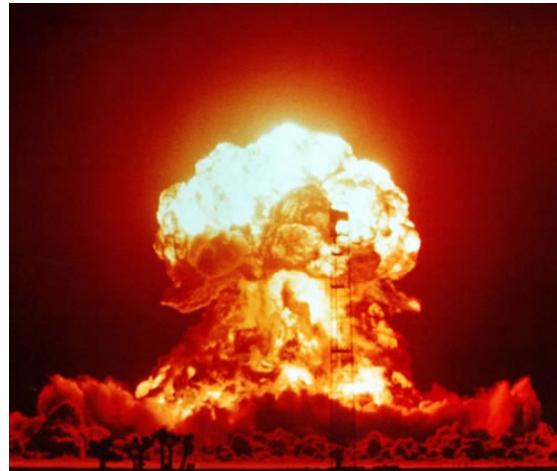


NEWSLETTER OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA

For Whom Does Your Government Work?

Recently, the History television channel aired a documentary on the Manhattan Project, the code name for the US drive to develop the first A-bomb. The world was engulfed in WWII at the time and both sides were racing to be the first to have this technological 'knockout blow' that would mean a successful end to the conflict. Ironically, two nations fighting on the same side, the US and the USSR, were the fiercest competitors in this project. The documentary tells us that a secret city was built in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, for 75 000 people and completed within a few months in 1943. Housing projects today for that many would take many years to complete for those in need. All inhabitants of this new city were necessary to running the city or to producing the uranium for the bomb. All were sworn to secrecy. The largest building in the world was constructed for the uranium at a cost of \$10 billion in today's values. Another city, also constructed rapidly and at fantastic cost, was created in Los Alamos, New Mexico, when the switch was made to plutonium fuel. The expense and organization necessary for these two projects is almost



beyond belief, but highlights how governments work, and for whom. Throughout the Depression years of the 1930s, unemployed workers and their malnourished families were told there was no work and governments at all levels could afford little, or no, relief. Life, for the average person, was a struggle for survival. WWII, like all wars, was a conflict between the interests of various European capitalist groups over competition for resources and markets, with the US forced to participate after the Pearl Harbour incident. Each competing group had to win the war at all costs. Unimaginable amounts of money and lives were expended to pursue the war, and, of course, to rebuild the destruction in the post-war years. The point is that for years no money could be found to feed, clothe, or house the citizens of the countries in depression, but to de-

fend the interests of the capitalist class there is absolutely no limit. This is again obvious today as workers lose their jobs, livelihoods, and homes while trillion dollar bail-outs go to the financial sector to prop up the capitalist market system that got us to this point. Governments will continue to do the minimum necessary for the working class, those who produce all the wealth, in order that we are fit enough to enable the system to function as long as we, the majority, continue to tolerate the private ownership of the world's riches and resources by a tiny minority who contribute nothing and yet live in luxury. States and their central governments are a necessary part of enabling capitalism to operate. It legitimizes the vast appropriation of wealth from the producer and provides the army, police, and judicial system to enforce it. It is there to work in the capitalist system's interests and must do just that. Any benefits to the citizens are done to continue the smooth operation of capitalism. Only socialism can bring the Common Ownership of those riches and organize them democratically in the interests of all, not just for a few parasites as is the case today.

Common Ownership

means that the resources of the world and the means to produce useful goods from them would be owned by everyone and, therefore, by no one. All humanity would be producers meeting as equals to decide what, how, and where to produce based solely on mankind's needs. Distribution of goods and services would deny no one access to what they needed. This system would end the present class system and render money, trade, employment, exploitation, want, and war obsolete.

We welcome correspondences with our readers. Send email to spc@iname.com or write us at BOX 4280, Victoria BC, V8X 3X8

Losing Ground

Canada is a land of millions of lakes and, naturally, water activities figure high on the list of summer activities. However, this wonderful natural resource comes with a price. In 2005, there were 492 drownings in Canadian lakes, 164 in Ontario, with a high immigrant population, more at risk because many come from countries where recreational swimming and boating, and water educational programs, are rare. It would make sense, then, to teach children to swim and to be safe around water as part of their educational experience. The city of Toronto was unusual in that most of its schools had pools

and the kind of instruction, in an educational setting, that taught many thousands of children swimming, survival, and water safety skills. Gradually, as the budget restraints of the 1970s kicked in, qualified teachers were replaced by lower-paid lifeguards. When the neo-con era arrived in Ontario in the 1990s,

the tax cuts that spawned public spending and service cutbacks, put pressure on school boards to close the pools altogether. Today, some pools are idle, unused, and the rest await the axe, desperately seeking funding to continue operating. Recently, the Toronto Star, together with the local YMCA, announced they would fund a summer swim program for one hundred children. Nice gesture, but we have lost, or are in the process of losing, a publicly



Slaying The Dragon of Poverty for 175 Years (And Counting)

On St. George's Day, April 23rd., The Toronto Star readers were treated to a photo of Ken Foxcroft of the St. George's Society, proclaiming that his organization had been slaying the dragons of poverty for 175 years. The thrust of the article was that the society has an excellent record of beating poverty, ill health, and loneliness. The society also supports twenty-six charities with donations of \$5 000 to \$1 million, focusing particularly on health care, the arts and heritage, and education. While they are probably well-meaning people, it seems to have escaped their notice that the dragon of poverty is still very much alive. In fact, the Ontario Association of Food Banks recently released a report showing that poverty's total cost to the Ontario economy amounts to \$38 billion, and, in this economic climate, food banks are one of the few growth

industries. Charities and reforms of the system have been ongoing for 200 years, but neither has eradicated poverty. The capitalist system is the problem and no amount of good deeds or reform legislation will make any real difference. Workers produce enough wealth to take good care of every inhabitant on earth, but, because the means of producing wealth are owned privately, then those who own feel it is their right to appropriate the lion's share for themselves and leave just enough for the workers to render them fit to continue producing more wealth. There are many who are deemed necessary to the profit system only occasionally, as needed, and these unfortunates obtain the barest of necessities. The knights of the St. George Society would be better advised helping to slay the only dragon that needs slaying, the capitalist dragon.

funded educational program for hundreds of thousands and we have, once again, to rely on those who have, or command, the wealth necessary to provide a patchwork program for a few. How come we are, as a society, vastly more productive and wealthy than we were fifty years ago and yet we can't afford the public services we had then? Obviously, a smaller and smaller portion of that vast wealth created by the working population is going to the public good. It makes common sense to provide programs such as the water safety program to every child. Common sense only comes with Common Ownership.

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